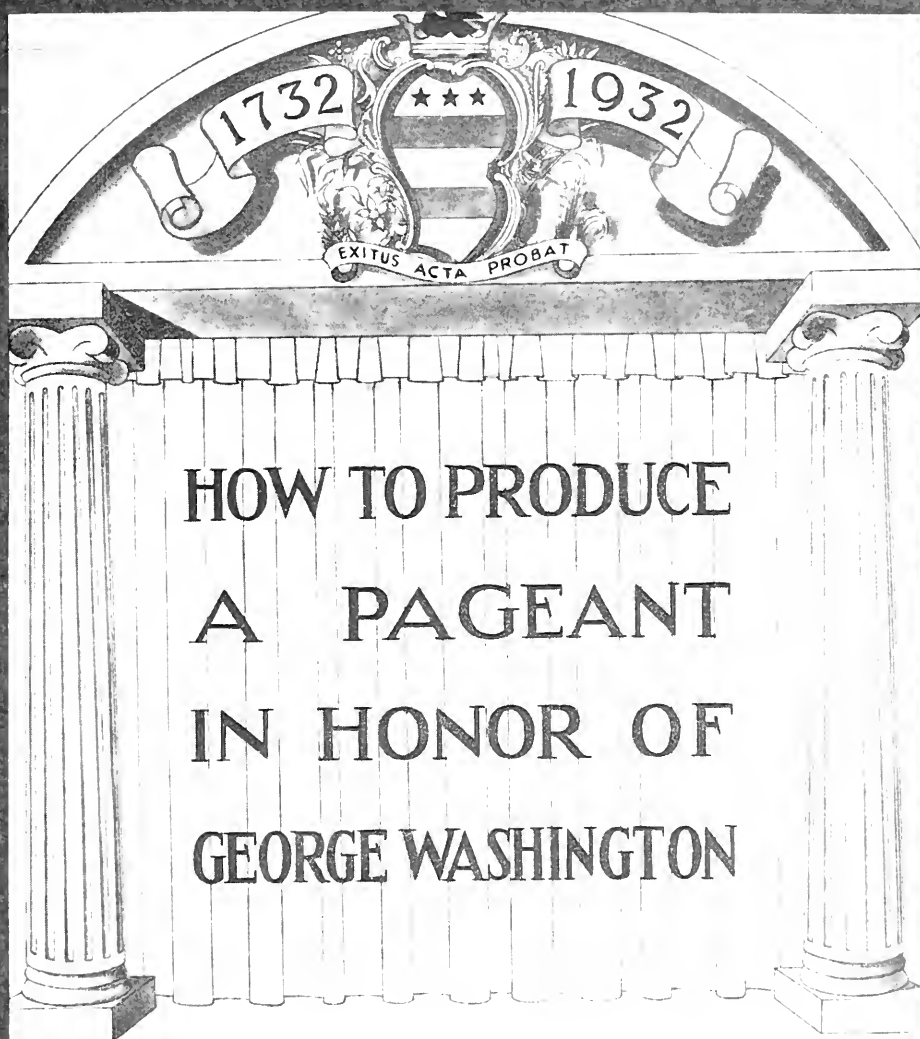


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HOW TO PRODUCE  
A PAGEANT  
IN HONOR OF  
GEORGE WASHINGTON

THE UNITED STATES  
GEORGE WASHINGTON  
BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION  
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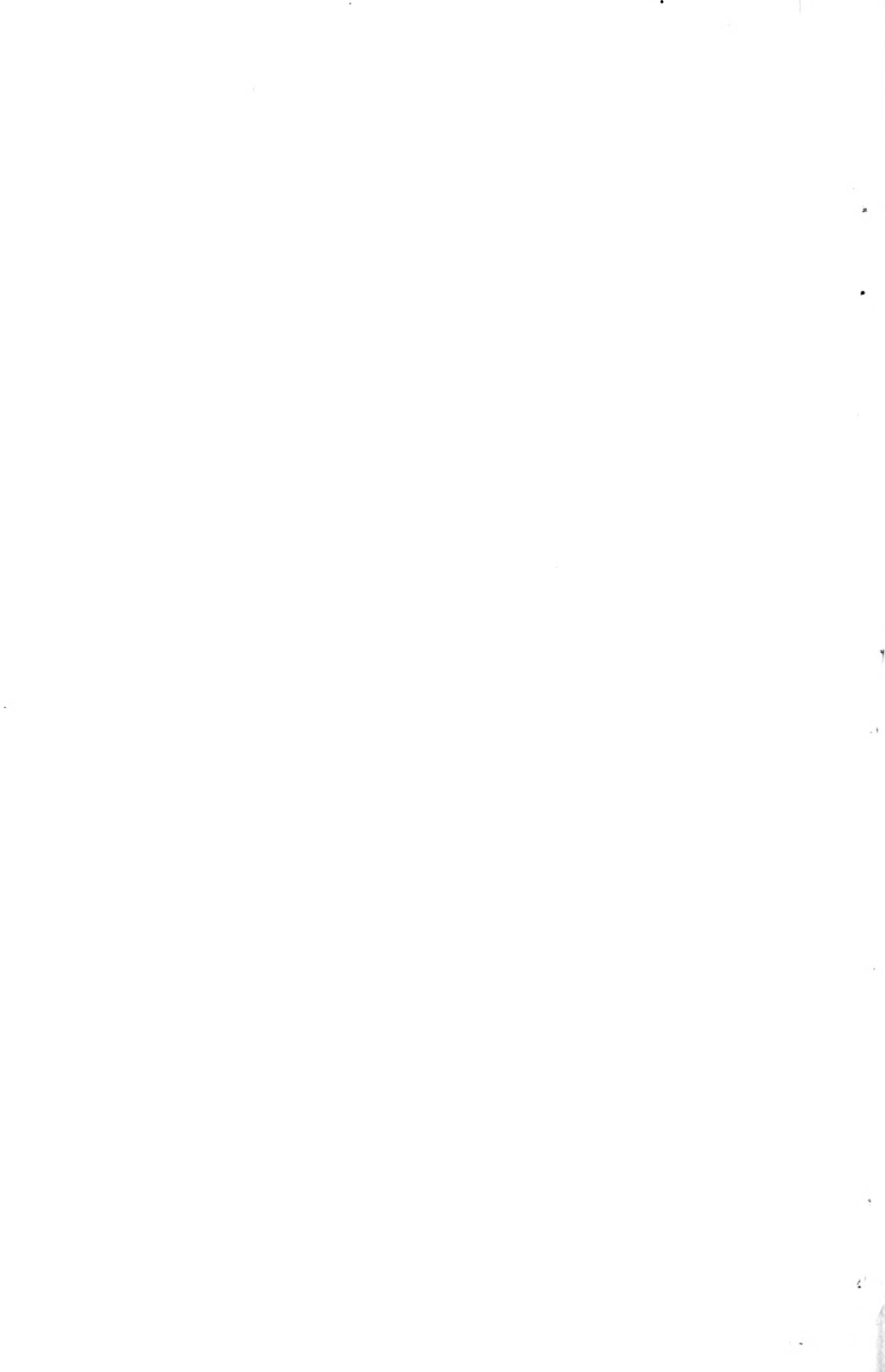
ILLINOIS HISTORICAL SURVEY

HOW TO PRODUCE A PAGEANT  
IN HONOR OF  
GEORGE WASHINGTON

*By*  
ESTHER WILLARD BATES

Written for the  
BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION  
IN 1932

UNITED STATES GEORGE WASHINGTON  
BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, D. C.



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## FOREWORD

NO TYPE of commemoration comes nearer to the heart than one in which the individual takes part and expresses himself while he is expressing a great theme. A pageant in honor of the Two Hundredth Anniversary of the Birth of George Washington is such a commemoration.

A participant not only has the opportunity of contemplating the greatness of George Washington but of actually living, for the time being, in that greatness of spirit. He experiences the patience of waiting, the wise recognition of human shortcomings, the unselfish abnegation of personal longings, the thrill of courage and the high dedication which characterized not only Washington but the men of Washington's time. He enters also upon a community undertaking in which cooperative endeavor is at a maximum. In circumstances the like of this, members of a community grow in citizenship. Thus, the pageantic opportunity of the Bicentennial is to be joyfully acclaimed.

The aim of this pamphlet is to aid, in so far as possible within the limits of a few pages, such communities as wish by their own efforts to honor the Father of Our Country in pageantry; and while the full possibilities of beauty and perfection march far ahead of many amateur undertakings, painstaking and enthusiastic production offers rewards well worth while.

## WRITING A PAGEANT

First, the text of a pageant should not be too long. Its episodes should be written dramatically; employing suspense, surprise, characterization, and climax. These episodes are usually connected by prologues or by allegorical interludes which convey the deeper meaning of the entire pageant. Action is desirable throughout. Dialogue should be brief, pointed, and euphonious. The finale, providing as it does for the massing of the entire cast, should be the most impressive scene of all. A pageant must employ, whenever suitable, colorful costumes and setting; music, both vocal and instrumental; pantomime; and dancing.

### *Material*

With these requisites in mind, the author will begin his work of gathering material. Research should be confined to the subject immediately in hand. From the more brief accounts of the life and times of George Washington, choose such episodes as do not require more players than the selected stage can accommodate. Scenes in which there is an element of conflict are especially desirable. Enrich these episodes with details of daily living. Enliven the scenes with picturesque characters out of the imagination. Finally, do not lose sight of the effect which contemporary European events had upon the American struggle.

### *Length*

The length of the pageant must be determined. If it is planned for out-of-doors, it may last as long as three hours, since novelty of surroundings prevents boredom on the part of the audience. Two hours and a half is ideal. For indoors, unless the pageant is exceptionally colorful and exciting, one and one-half to two hours is long enough. The playing length of a manuscript may be estimated by allowing a page (double-spaced and typewritten) a minute to the dialogue; pantomime, unless described in great detail, plays four or five pages to the minute. A pageant of eight episodes will probably average ten minutes to an episode—that is, ten pages of dialogue. The remaining time will be given over to the link passages between episodes. Inasmuch as these link passages may take the form of a poetic "chorus," a poem preceding each episode like a prologue but set to music and sung; or a series of symbolic tableaux interspersed throughout the action; or pantomimic allegories; or even interpretive dances, telling the story of the natural background of field, wood and the spirits that dwell therein,—the variation in playing time is necessarily so great that the only sure test is actual rehearsal.

## OUTDOOR SITES

A natural amphitheatre is greatly to be desired, but in any case the site should be chosen for beauty, for space and for the excellence of its acoustics. A lake or stream adds to the acoustic advantages, as well as to the beauty of scene. The ground must be firm and level for the dances and dramatic action. If possible, the prevailing breeze should blow from players to spectators. Temporary seats may be used, a grandstand erected, or the audience may sit on the grassy hillside. Unstable weather conditions can be met either by providing an alternate day or an alternate place within doors.

### *Historic Sites*

It is a popular and worthy custom to stage an historic pageant on the very site where the major event of the pageant occurred. If possible, this is a wise precedent to follow. General Washington travelled up and down the entire Atlantic seaboard during his years as Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army. There were battles fought where the lay of the land is still somewhat open. There are standing edifices in which he spoke, churches where he worshiped, and houses where he slept. It will be more than fitting that such places serve as the background of pageants in his honor. So great an occasion as the Two Hundredth Anniversary of the Birth of George Washington, however, should arouse every community and every organization to universal mustering of service, whether or not a site has been hallowed by memories of Washington's presence.

### *Size*

A pageant with a cast of not more than forty people may be staged on a grass plot as small as fifteen by thirty feet. Such a pageant should play to an audience of only three or four hundred. The stage must be increased steadily in size as the number of actors is increased. The proportions of the cast of the pageant are curiously relative to the size of the audience, a pageant of three hundred actors playing suitably to an audience of two to three thousand. This, however, is no arbitrary rule and if the number of spectators is diminished, the number of performances may be increased. A small pageant, presented on a series of afternoons and evenings, may be produced before as large a number of spectators in the aggregate as the large pageant played but once or twice. But the great outdoor spaces seem to call for a multitude. A playing space nine hundred feet long by six thousand feet deep is not too large for a community to prepare and then to fill with inspiring pageantry.

### *Essentials*

Much is essential in an outdoor site beside the size. Unless the pageant is played upon land which has been rolled and cut regularly



for at least a year, the uneven condition presents a serious problem. The best thing to do is to roll the ground site heavily again and again and cover it with sand, pine needles, or other material to bring it to a level. A stage may be built, having a sort of inner stage for episodes requiring a small cast and for dances. This outdoor stage should be painted to approximate the shade of the surroundings. But such a stage is artificial and should only be used where time is short and every other device seemingly impracticable.

#### *Center for Stage*

A focus for the audience, which shall mark the center of the playing place and help the director arrange his groups properly, may be a natural object such as an unusually large tree or rock, or may be built artificially. Sometimes an arch spans the playing place, back center; sometimes an altar marks a middle point. Pylons or columns may be placed in a design to serve as background or to afford entrances. Pedestals, thrones, platforms, raised dais or other details, if the action permits, are all suitable for out-of-doors. A rustic air may be given them with vines and evergreens. For historic purposes, Indian tepees, forts, blockhouses, or cabins are often necessary. The important thing to remember is that all stage furnishings should be related to as much of the action as possible. If they play but a minor part, they should be placed unobtrusively at one side of the pageant stage or be blocked out by portable screens of foliage when not required. It is permissible to have a series of centers for a pageant stage and place one action about a fort or other device, which for the time is the focal point in the arena; then center later episodes, as expedient, to left or right of the fort, only taking care not to move the center of interest too far from any portion of the spectators nor to place the scene of the climax too far from the stage center.

#### *Background*

No art can exceed nature's own background; the sky-line, the rocks, the forests, the waters all contribute. When there are no trees, trees can be potted temporarily on location or planted for permanent beautifying of the pageant site. For the aspect of spring, small bare trees, pink with blossoms made of bits of cloth or crepe paper twisted profusely upon them, serve nicely. Meshed wire, interwoven with evergreen boughs, is always a practical scenic aid. Rows of trees or evergreens will be found a great convenience where screened entrances are needed. Banks of trees at the back and sides of a pageant stage help to conserve and direct the sound effects.

#### *Properties*

For properties: settees, tables, stools, spinning-wheels, handlooms and the small household accessories (such as kettles, pails, chopping

trays and outdoor cooking and washing utensils) are permissible and add not only to the action but to the realism of the pageant.

#### *Orchestra or Band*

The musicians must be near enough the stage, whether directly in front or to the side, to make it possible for them to give the pitch to the singers easily and to send and receive cues to and from the players in the scenes that require music.

#### *Grandstand*

For the audience, wide aisles are requisite and many exits. In the simpler outdoor pageant, the audience may sit on the grass of the slopes. Mats and cushions can of course be offered for rent. If there is a level spot on the site, chairs should be provided. With pageants that are thrown open to a community free of charge, this is often the best way inasmuch as grandstands materially increase the cost of a production. A grandstand may be built for the occasion that will serve as a permanent addition to the civic life of the community. Where such is not desirable or possible, stands can be hired from firms in the larger cities. Funeral directors rent chairs in varying numbers and seats may be borrowed from schools and churches. When the spectators are to be seated on planks, fifteen to eighteen inches—marked off by heavy lines stencilled in black—should be allowed to each spectator and plainly numbered to make clear the rights of each ticket holder. The greatest care should be taken to meet the legal building requirements in order to insure safety for all.

#### *Accommodations for Spectators*

The following accommodations are usual back of the grandstand: parking space for cars; dressing rooms for ladies and gentlemen; make-up rooms; wardrobe room; rest rooms for both men and women; and a Red Cross room. These "rooms" are frequently tents. The space within the circle of these tents is assigned as a gathering place for the players who await their cues. This central space is overseen by marshals, or episode directors, and callboys. Settees should be provided, but not so many that the players are prevented from moving freely. Naturally the area is to be screened from passersby.

#### *Traffic*

Traffic of all kinds should be kept as far from the playing place as possible. Authorities may be prevailed upon to divert traffic during the hours of the pageant and thus an otherwise annoying obstacle be removed.

#### *Weather*

There being no way to insure good weather, pageant directors ought to arrange either for a postponement in case of rain, stating

the second choice with time and place upon the ticket, or for indoor performance, as an alternative. Always provide for indoor rehearsals in case the weather makes them necessary, and post the two places of meeting long beforehand.

#### *Insurance*

Remember, even though the sky is clear, a wet pageant ground ruins costumes, spoils dances and makes the next performance a tawdry one. If heavy expense accompany the production, it is wise to carry insurance against the financial loss from bad weather and consequent postponement.

### INDOOR SETTINGS

In a theatre, plan to use the entire floor space of the stage. In a hall, build a platform that will accommodate the players of the largest episode without crowding. Proportions of hall and platform should be studied by an architect or an artist who can advise as to the size of the platforms, the placing of entrances and stairways and the adaptations necessary for any special grouping of symbolic characters in balconies and niches. Churches which are suited to community observances offer interesting possibilities in the proportion and design of the chancel, the location of pulpit and reading desk, and oftentimes in lofty niches.

#### *Levels*

A use of different levels will make the plainest platform varied and decorative. There may be a raised dais, a small platform, niche, or arched pedestal in the center back, or at either side. Small platforms, approached by steps, are admirable for symbolic figures. George Washington may be given the highest level to stand upon whenever the action permits. Grouping is greatly enhanced by such devices and more players can be utilized. Other units are columns, altars and arches. An arch, center front in one episode, if placed diagonally to one side and draped with vines can be made to serve as an entrance in another episode. Platforms, pedestals and the like are to be hired from firms dealing in scenery, with permission to paint them. Unsized water-soluble paint washes off. Use exactly the right color needed for the general scheme of decoration. Metal also will take this kind of paint, and interesting effects may be had by using such simple devices as metal waste-baskets, colored and turned upside down for stools and pedestals. By adding scrolled backs of beaverboard, the most commonplace wooden chairs, when bronzed or tinted, are converted into splendid thrones.

Screens also are very adaptable portable units and, painted differently on front and back, when turned, give the impression of a different set. By rolling on two screens, stencilled with pine boughs against a sky, and adjusting the lights to the time of day and to

out-of-doors, the effect of woodland country may be given. Little pines on standards draped with evergreens may be placed about. Other outdoor backgrounds may be made of mesh wire thickly woven with pine and hemlock boughs. Pine needles make a realistic ground covering. Grass may be represented by grass mats rented from funeral directors' establishments.

Stairways to the platform may be placed from either aisle, in the center, or at both ends. Wherever placed, they make interesting approaches and permit actors upon occasion to group themselves and become a part of the setting. But stairs and platforms must not squeak. The lumber must be well-seasoned and securely nailed. A covering of heavy cloth or padding insures quiet at the same time that it improves appearances. Usually this covering should be brown or green. The neutral brown of the wrong side of old Brussels carpet is an unobtrusive shade.

#### *Changes in Setting*

Changes in setting may be made behind a curtain while the portions of the link plot are going on. They may be made openly, the articles being brought on and off by property men, preferably in costume. They may be made in darkness. Organization and much rehearsing is essential to speed and quiet.

#### *Curtains*

A safe background for a pageant is a curtain, hung close to the back wall to give all possible playing space and flanked with side curtains, divided once or twice, to afford the requisite number of entrances. Curtains may be made from canton flannel, denim, monks-cloth, poplin, velveteen, if the purse permits, or from dyed, lined or doubled, unbleached cotton cloth. Abundant fullness to folds and an agreeable neutral color are the desiderata. A soft gray-green may suggest an interior; with trees and screens of evergreens, a forest background. Sky blue is a horizon-line color when judiciously lighted. Gray is also an adaptable atmosphere color, but should not be too dark. Home-dyed fabrics have a slight unevenness which gives the effect of varied texture, though careless dyeing may result in streakiness. When curtains are introduced, a frame to enclose the front of the stage, or some other device to take the place of the proscenium arch, is needed. A simple way of meeting the problem is to hang a valance overhead from a temporary rod, for covering shifts in setting or changes in episodes. Shallow side curtains, added to the valance and as screening to the entrances, are necessities, as is a draw curtain.

#### *Flats*

It may be that canvas-made scenery is preferable to back the stage. Such scenery is made by tacking unbleached domestic sheeting upon wooden frames made of 1 x 3 inch lumber. The cloth comes in

seventy-two inch width. Size it with flake-white glue dissolved in the proportions of one cup of glue to four quarts of water; give twelve hours for drying; then paint with any dry color paint mixed in water. These sets should be equipped with three hinges to each unit and painted a different color on each side that they may be reversed. To provide a different set of scenery for each of the six to ten episodes necessitates too much time given to scene shifting. Furthermore, as the episodes are brief compared with the acts of a play, many changes will prove confusing, and it is difficult to hold the spell over the imagination once it is broken. Always in planning the stage design of a pageant, keep the settings flexible so that they may be easily put up and taken down.

#### *Decorative Devices*

Decorations of national or historic insignia used freely in the auditorium add much to the spirit of the occasion. Coats of arms of city, state, or of George Washington and his associates, make beautiful units, stencilled and colored and placed about the hall over the sconces or doorways or on pillars. These may be done on oiled paper or on tracing paper and illuminated. They may likewise be stencilled on the stage curtains.

Civic and military designs, mottoes, crossed swords and muskets may equally well be used as units of decoration. Long panels, in patriotic colors, with pictures or designs upon them, may be painted on ordinary wrapping paper, weighted and hung from the very top of the wall to reach nearly to the floor. Such decoration will do much to transform an interior.

Banners should be treated in the same way, hung flat to the wall, or, after the manner in European cathedrals, hung out at right angles. They may be carried in processional and recessional and always make an inspiring finale. They can hardly be too large or too broadly designed or brilliantly colored. Ushers should wear costumes of the period. Flowers, tree boughs, vines and evergreens add to the note of festivity. Nothing should be left undone to create an atmosphere of rejoicing in the great American traditions that General Washington helped so richly to bequeath to us.

### COSTUMES

A person with dependable artistic feeling should be in charge, for, in addition to historical accuracy in designing pageant costumes, group effects must be studied and color schemes for each episode and for the finale arranged with a full knowledge that colors change under different lights. Color, like music and light, is important in arousing emotion and stimulating attention as well as in giving beauty. It should be used liberally, therefore, with all the richness and ingenuity possible. Pageantry demands it.

*Color Combinations*

The intermediate shades, mauves, apricots and blue greens, which are obtainable nowadays, were seldom seen in Washington's day. Soldiers' costumes are dictated by history as to color. Ordinary costumes will probably combine well, if the designer sticks to the usual shades of red, blue, green and the less frequent purples, thrown into relief by the more common browns, grays and blacks. When ladies are dressed in delicate hues, care must be taken not to destroy the value of the tones by vivid suitings for the men. Sunlight gives colors at their full values; artificial light, when gelatine screens of different shades are used, makes strange and unexpected changes. In consequence, all costumes must be donned at an early rehearsal, while there is still time to make sweeping alterations. Distance, out-of-doors, softens color and adds a faint atmospheric blue.

*Dyeing*

For fabrics, unbleached muslin, denim and canton flannel are the least expensive. These should be bought at wholesale and dyed to suit. Dyeing gives a wider choice of color and it can simulate faded and worn effects. It also, at a distance, being slightly uneven, gives the impression of softer and more beautiful textures.

*Blockprinting*

Blockprinting and stenciling, to simulate embroidery, are easily done; hence should be used liberally. For economy stencils are made from brown paper, stiffened with shellac, the cutting out of the design done with small, sharp scissors. Any oil paint, dissolved in a small quantity of turpentine, will serve. Decorations may be put on free hand, if the worker be sufficiently skilful. For this the least expensive paint comes under the heading of "Show Card Colors." For blockprinting, the design is first drawn on a piece of wood or linoleum, then cut out, in order to leave the pattern elevated a little on the surface of the block. The cloth to be blockprinted is spread on a pad of blotting paper or old soft cloth. The design, after being painted in the color desired, is placed face down on the garment and pressed firmly upon the fabric. When stenciling is to be done in gold, the powdered gold is purchased in tins and mixed with what is known as "bronzing liquid." For blockprinting in gold or metallic colors, buy what is called "silver size" and print with it as if it were the colored paint, but while it is still moist sprinkle the powdered gold or silver on it, letting stand for twelve hours before brushing off. An inexpensive fabric, dyed a lovely color and decorated with gold or silver embroidery, gives the impression of a very rich and beautiful garment.

*Period Properties*

Special care must be taken to provide hats and shoes of the right period. Buckles can be fashioned of pasteboard, painted silver, and

an elastic band run through the buckle over the shoe and under the instep, or buckles may be cut from tin. Hats are easily concocted of canton flannel over pasteboard foundations. High boots are cut from leatherette or enamel cloth after the fashion of leggings and are finished by an unobtrusive strap of black elastic passing under the foot. The cheapest of paper fans, gilded and painted, look decorative and furnish a brilliant note of color. The eighteenth century was a courtly period, and the value of its picturesque details of reticules, snuff boxes, canes, laces, rosettes, buckles and jewelry cannot be overlooked.

### *The Professional Costumer*

Professional costumers give historical accuracy and save time and trouble. They will costume an entire pageant, down to the last items of hat, shoes, wig and such accessories as fan, snuff box, bow and arrows, gun and powder horn. This is, of course, the easiest way, and sometimes not much more expensive than buying the cloth and making the garments. Out of fairness to the costumer, however, pains should be taken to give him, as early as possible, a complete list of the characters with their approximate ages and sizes, and whether or not shoes, hats and wigs are to be added. Estimates from all available costumers should be secured. Before closing with the accepted firm, a representative committee should personally inspect the garments to be hired. If the costumers are contracted early, they have opportunity to get material and make costumes. It goes without saying that costumes should be well treated and returned promptly.

With an artist to make designs and a good corps of workers, it cannot be denied that a more distinctive group of costumes, more carefully copied from portraits, may be achieved by home talent. If, in addition, great economy is used in the purchase of material at wholesale, the costumes will usually cost a little less and may be rented later, or used again and again; while if they are good, sometimes the entire outfit can be sold to a firm of costumers. Certainly these garments have a better fit. Incidentally, individual players often take a keen interest in and make their own costumes or pay to have them made.

The United States George Washington Bicentennial Commission is issuing a booklet on costumes of the time of George Washington, entitled "George Washington Play and Pageant Costume Book," which illustrates and describes the civilian costumes of the period for men, women and children, as well as military uniforms.

### MAKE-UP

Theatrical make-up is essential to any pageant. It need not be as minutely done as on the professional stage, but it should be well

done. Since the players are seen under brilliant lights, too great care cannot be taken with the detail of their appearance. Usually it is economical to have the firm of costumers furnish the make-up artists. Where there are few principal actors and many supernumeraries, one experienced make-up man to every twenty players will suffice. He may have as assistants volunteer helpers who know enough about the art of make-up to apply powder, rouge, lip salve and eyebrow pencil. If a professional make-up man cannot be provided, study any good book on make-up for explicit directions. Make-up should then be experimented with at the dress rehearsal, or before, and wigs tried on and fitted.

The simplest make-up for a hundred or more pageanteers consists of dry powder: flesh color for women; dark flesh, mixed with a little brown, for the men. Instead of buying a single kind for each sex, it is well to get several kinds; pale flesh for necks and arms, pink for faces, a deeper pink and also two or three of the sunburn colors or browns. Powder is easy to mix by spreading a sufficient quantity on a large piece of paper, and stirring it. Not only the face, but necks and ears, and, if they are uncovered, arms and legs as well, must be made up. The white skin of the body looks unnatural on the stage, and with men especially great pains should be taken to powder such portions of the skin as the character in the episode might leave exposed to weather.

For Indians, or characters which are required to be painted all over, use two cupfuls of unsized dry powder. (Even kalsomine has served the purpose.) Mix with water till creamy, add one cupful powdered zinc oxide and one-half cupful of glycerine, and apply with a sponge. A quart of this mixture suffices to paint twelve medium-sized people. The best color for Indians is known as "Dutch Pink." It gives a warm brown tint and washes off with plain water. A powder known as *bolominia* can be bought at drug stores specializing in make-up and is often used for Indians. Mixed in varying proportions with flesh powder it gives beautiful sun-tan values. Black and very dark brown powder can be purchased, also yellows and yellow browns, so that practically any shade of skin may be imitated.

#### *Rouge and Lip-Stick*

Dark rouge for men and light rouge for women is the rule; the color placed low on the face for age, high for youth, but always approximating the natural flush upon the individual face. Lipstick should be used sparingly, very little or none at the corners of the mouth.

For a more elaborate make-up with grease paint, such as should be given to prominent characters, be sure to have a drawing of the original for the make-up artist to copy. *Thebpaint*, a substitute for the older grease paint, has a water-soluble foundation and is easier to remove than grease paint. It comes in all shades.



*False Hair*

Dark hair may be powdered gray or white. Moustaches and beards are made from "crepe hair." This comes in black, brown, white, auburn and blonde shades. A third of a yard may be purchased at any store which deals in theatrical make-up; unbraided, soaked until it is straight, and the beards or moustaches fashioned by twisting with the fingers. The strands are put in place with spirit gum. Beards should be put on lock by lock, beginning low on the chin and gradually rising higher, till the right line of growth along the cheek is reached. Moustaches are put first on one side of the upper lip, then on the other. The artists of the community usually prove more or less deft at this type of work, although a professional is always best.

## LIGHTING

*Candles*

A pageant of colonial times needs to pay especial attention to the types of formal lighting then in use. Fortunately the candles of the period were reasonably similar to the cheapest white candles in use today. The candles were placed in candlesticks and candelabra of a variety of sizes and shapes. Holders called sconces, which were placed at either side the mantel or on either side of large mirrors, were frequent. Sometimes the candelabra were triple, five and even seven-branched. Occasionally rounded glass chimneys were placed over candles. At Mount Vernon a candle hung from the ceiling in a rectangular case of iron and crystal, approximately ten to twelve inches square and was called a lantern.

*Lanterns and Torches*

The oil lamps of the period had round, slender bases and round chimneys. Outdoor lanterns, such as those common among farmers, were ordinarily of iron, square or cylindrical in shape, with perforations for the light to come through and wire handles. Torches of resinous pine knots and home-made oil torches were both in use.

Fire-places and camp-fires were other means of lighting ordinarily employed. These are easily devised by wrapping small light bulbs in a two or three plug attachment and placing twigs over them. A piece of lighted punk provides the smoke. Pocket flashes may be substituted for bulbs when it is impossible to attach to an electric current.

*Fire Precautions and Lighting*

Electricity and fire are always attended by some risk. Therefore a licensed electrician should be in attendance. Town regulations must be carefully observed and all necessary permits obtained in

good time. To provide against the blowing out of fuses, each ten ampere fuse should be replaced by a fifteen ampere fuse. Cables and cords should be kept dry. Powerful bulbs not protected by boxes or stands should be laid on a piece of asbestos. Camp-fires should be set over a piece of asbestos. If burning punk is used, the punk should be placed in a metal dish and safe-guarded from touching any cloth-sheathed cable. Open fires and blazing torches should never be allowed near players in flimsy garments. Curtains, hangings, and the wearing apparel of players close to unprotected fires should be treated with fire-proof solutions.

### *Lighting for a Hall*

Assuming that the pageant is to be given in a hall and on a platform, the very minimum of equipment is a couple of spotlights, one on either side, slightly above the level of the faces of the players; lights and operators to be concealed from the spectators by screens. Other simple units are a set of footlights; borders, augmented by bunch lights and spotlights at either side, and a floodlight trained from the balcony, according to the resources and ingenuity of the electrician. A set of dimmers is a great addition to the outfit; so, too, is a set of colored gelatine slides. Footlights, border lights and bunch lights may be made by amateurs. Strap sockets are procurable at the five and ten cent stores.. Bunch lights can be backed by a tin pan as a reflector. Overhead lights must be concealed by strips of cloth.

### *Spotlights*

Spotlights are large, medium and small. They are most suited to a small stage or platform and should have ground glass lenses to give softness. If it is impossible to rent or purchase them, bridge lamps or reading lamps may be borrowed, metal reflectors contrived from dish pans, and bulbs of two hundred and fifty watts screwed in.

### *Floodlights*

Floodlights cover the largest lighting area. Placed at the back of the hall on a sufficiently high pedestal, or trained from the back of the balcony or from either side of it, they may supplement the spotlights, help in the obliteration of shadows, and are useful near the end of a pageant for some allegorical group of great beauty and for the finale. They are most necessary for a large stage or out-or-doors.

### *Dimmers*

A rheostat, more often called a dimmer, is an apparatus for controlling the volume of current—in other words, to increase or decrease the amount of light by imperceptible degrees. By means of it the dawn flushes into day, the dusk deepens into night. It reveals a scene little by little; it permits a scene to fade slowly from the

eyes of the spectators like a dream. It is light, modulated as is music or the human voice. A series of dimmers, one to every circuit, is ideal. But the device is comparatively expensive and a minimum of two can be effective.

### *Renting Supplies*

Lamps, dimmers, and sometimes cable can be rented from supply shops for about one-tenth of their retail price. Really good lamps are durable, easily adjusted to height or angle, have adjustable color plates and are light-tight, so they do not leak light. Plenty of cable is needed for the various outlets provided by the hall, since few halls are built with a view to elaborate pageant lighting. Cable should be strong enough to carry a far heavier current than the electrician plans to use. Sometimes much of the equipment may be borrowed from the theatre.

### *Placing the Lights*

In placing the lights, the chief consideration is the avoidance of shadows. One shadow obliterates the opposite one, so opposite spots safeguard each other. A flood at the back helps to do away with shadows, although if it is over powerful compared to the spots, it spreads a shadow of its own. Foot and border lights, in turn, aid in dispelling the shadow thrown by the flood. Thus a complete lighting equipment is desirable. Then, too, the combination gives brilliancy and verve to the scene. A concealed spot may be focussed upon a group of candles so that one corner of the scene may have a special pool of light about the candelabra and the illusion be given that all the light proceeds from the gentle flicker of the tapers. The same can be done with a camp-fire or grate-fire. The scene, if at night, is probably a blue flood, dimmed slightly. The fire makes its own special glow, and a soft concealed light of amber brightens unobtrusively the group which sits about or before the embers.

Enough light should always be used to reveal changes of expression in the actors' faces. Brief intervals of darkness are excellent by way of contrast—a scene ending thus may be as beautiful as a dying strain of music—yet during the major portion of any scene, unless the audience sees the faces, it becomes inattentive.

### *Principles of Color Lighting*

The next considerations are the atmospheric ones, due to the time of day and night, sun or shadow, and the changes which will naturally occur in any given scene. Gelatine slides should be chosen for the exact coloring. These are purchasable for about twenty cents apiece. Most shops offer a choice of forty colors. Remember, however, that they melt from too much heat and break from dryness. See that the spot or flood has air holes to prevent the colored slides from melting.

The principle of color lighting is to remember that in sunlight

there are all the colors of the rainbow. Other light must have its color adjusted by combinations. Red, blue and yellow lights combine to give green, orange and violet values. If you desire a red light, you turn off the blue and green. The proportion in which the colors blend needs to be determined in rehearsal after the sets are painted and the costumes chosen. When in doubt, keep to amber. For night, blue is most often used. Backdrops of outdoor scenes should be flooded with a pale blue light. Be careful that every change of color means something. Too frequent changes of color within a scene make for artificiality, while changes of color for mere novelty, such as are sometimes thrown upon groups of dancers, are garish and tend to cheapen a production.

### *Special Lighting*

The link plot of a pageant often calls for special lighting devices. A small elevation or niche on either side of the stage may be used for allegorical figures or for tableaux. Within these the speakers of the prologues may stand hidden behind gauze drops. At the base and above, border strips of light connect with a dimmer. When an episode ends and the hall is in darkness, the lights of these borders are brought on gradually, with the result that the characters back of the gauze emerge slowly from a mist, like a vision; for despite its apparent thinness, theatrical gauze is entirely opaque when no light is turned on behind it. If sized, it will take gold, silver and colors. These drops may carry a design of patriotic emblems, with buff and blue insignia, or with the Washington motto, "Exitus acta probat." So, when the shining spirits of Freedom and Liberty gleam softly through the rich and colorful screen and then speak nobly, the spectators are surprised and deeply moved. The same lighting devices may shine through stained glass windows, devised of oiled paper but decorated and painted as richly and imaginatively as the artist wishes. If there is no curtain for the stage and the hall is in darkness, the stage may be silently reset for the next scene during the speech of the characters in the link plot.

### *Outdoor Lighting*

Outdoor lighting is more expensive than indoor, owing to the larger spaces to be lit. If the pageant is an afternoon one and out-of-doors, there will of course be no light except that of day. In those states which have daylight saving and evening does not really arrive till about nine o'clock, a late afternoon pageant is most charming. The declining sun turns browns and fawn colors to pure gold, and gives a flower-like vividness to blues and reds. As the sun sinks at last, the liquid blue of early evening deepens imperceptibly into a softer and softer beauty. The dusk comes, torches and red flares are brought on, and the shadowy players disappear into the dusk, their "insub-

stantial pageant" fading, their lights growing fainter and fainter, and the music dying away into silence.

For evening presentation, flambeaux, pine torches, lanterns—any type of lighting which gives an *al fresco* air to a festival—are in keeping for small pageants, provided sufficient visibility is afforded. Otherwise recourse must be had to electricity. Even stage furnishings can be suggested out-of-doors by this. For instance, a square of brilliant light upon a dark outdoor stage can give the impression of a room, a prisoner's cell, or an assembly hall. One or two cautions are necessary, however. A powerful current, such as is used out-of-doors, requires a heavy cable. Insect life needs to be taken into consideration, for light attracts mosquitoes and moths. On the other hand, a light wind will usually blow them away.

And last but not least, there should be plenty of light rehearsals, as well as a sufficient number of intelligent cooperative assistants. Few faults mar a pageant so much as careless and inadequate lighting, and conversely, no one adjunct can do more to give it beauty.

## MUSIC

Historically a George Washington pageant will find itself rich in contemporary music. Musical instruments of the eighteenth century were sufficiently numerous to make up an orchestra. The music of Europe was popular, as was that of the American composer, Francis Hopkinson. Martial, Indian and Negro music were familiar. Where the text gives opportunity, sounds of bells, drums, gourds, tomtoms, or watchman's rattles may be used appropriately. Interpretive music, apart from music used in episodes, may very well be drawn freely from any period; the songs, the dances used in episode and link plot will undoubtedly be both antique and interpretive. Finally, since no part of the pageant requires more careful attention than the music, early preparation, adequate rehearsing and the advice of a competent musician are imperative.

### *Musical Instruments*

The guitar was a favorite with young ladies, who were taught at boarding school to play it, as well as the spinet, the harpsichord, the organ, and the "forte piano." Old spinets and harpsichords are still to be found treasured by private families and in public collections. Their delicate tinkle makes an appealing accompaniment to song or dance in a small indoor pageant, but out-of-doors, or in a really large hall, their music is too thin to have value. Other instruments in common use were the flute, the violin, viola, 'cello and bass viol. Trumpets, hautboys, French horns and kettledrums were in evidence at the time as were fife and drum for martial music.

For a very small indoor pageant, a three-piece orchestra of piano,

violin and 'cello or flute, will serve very well. Five pieces are better, however; more, if the size of the hall or theatre demands it. When contracting with orchestra or band, plan for as many rehearsals as possible, in order that the conductor may become familiar with the mood and tempo of the scenes.

The tomtom was and is the instrument of the Indian. Such a drum may be imitated by stretching leather across the top of a wooden mixing bowl, drawing it as taut as possible and then tacking it closely about the rim just below the edge, and the bowl painted in an Indian design. A padded wooden stick serves for drumsticks. Dried gourds may be painted and used as rattles to accompany the tomtom. These Indian drums are sometimes as large as small tubs and sometimes no more than twelve inches in diameter. Two or three Indians can crouch about the larger ones, all beating on the same instrument. The trumpet may be used by itself to announce or to close an episode.

## DANCES

Dancing was done to the harpsichord, spinet, flute and violin. Two or four fiddles give a good accompaniment even out-of-doors. Costume the fiddlers and make them a part of the action of their episode. Many of the formal dances consisted largely of deep bows and curtsies. A swinging cape was worn by the gentlemen, the end of which could be held high in the lifted hand, while the lady balanced his gesture with her open fan held aloft.

Two dances were preeminently characteristic of the days of Washington: the formal minuet for the stately gathering; the Virginia Reel, or, as otherwise known, the Sir Roger de Coverley, for the more simple ones. The minuet has many steps and variations. Accounts of them are to be found in many books on dancing. Any of the typical minuet music written by a dozen and more contemporary composers can be used. The Virginia Reel is equally easy to teach. Both dances have the advantages of using practically any number of men and women.

Other dances of the time include jigs, reels, country dances—such as the "Successful Campaign," May Pole dances, the Highland Fling, the Hornpipe, the more formal Gavotte. It is possible that "Pop Goes the Weasel" and "Money Musk" were known. Both music and steps to many of these dances are given in *Old Familiar Dances with Figures*, by George C. Gott, published by the Oliver Ditson Company of Boston.

Dancing, especially Negro dancing, where clapping, stamping and "patting juba" were a part of the dance, was sometimes done to the words of a song. Negro dancing and singing is too well known not to have its values appreciated. Some of the spirituals may have been sung then as now, and the Negro shuffles and breakdowns danced.

The elemental qualities of the Indian dance is known to every one,

as are the crouching, the leaping, the cry and the curious, rather intricate, shuffling step. Choosing music for the Indian dance, however, provides another problem, inasmuch as the music differed with the tribes, and the period is too distant for us to know how the dances of the Indian Nations resembled, in the eighteenth century, or differed from, the dances of the west and southwest Indians of today. The safest way is to choose music of a general Indian character, such as MacDowell's "From an Indian Lodge," Coleridge Taylor's "Hiawatha's Wedding Feast," Converse's "Pipe of Peace," Arthur Farwell's wide range of Indian music, and Frederick Burton's "American Primitive Music, with special reference to the songs of the Ojibways."

A collection of the dance music of the time of George Washington is issued by the United States George Washington Bicentennial Commission.

## REHEARSALS

The first players to be enlisted must be sought out and encouraged to take part; others will follow voluntarily. Speaking parts may be assigned at a series of tryouts immediately before the beginning of rehearsals. The players temporarily assigned to each episode read and walk through their parts. Five to eight minutes may be spent with a group. The director makes notes copiously, jotting down name, address, height, approximate weight, coloring, voice, carriage and ability to characterize. He reserves the privilege of shifting the parts, even after the players have been cast, since subsequent rehearsing often enlightens him further as to the abilities of the individuals.

Work upon the pageant begins with a reading rehearsal. The director or author describes the pageant as a whole, gives the mood of the episode to be read and establishes the background. Discussion as to the characters, the emotional values, the placing of the climax, the rhythm and the tempo of the piece is encouraged, and the rehearsal schedule is mapped out, with day, hour and place. The episode director assumes responsibility for notifying the players and for following up absentees.

Each player has been sent a carbon copy of his episode. Then at the first rehearsal the distances and movements are made clear to him and entrances and exits designated. If the rehearsals are to be held out-of-doors, pains will have been taken to mark off boundaries with rope or lines of whitewash on the grass and routes through trees and shrubbery indicated by bright-colored tags tied to bush or tree, or the same type of numbering by which motor routes are indicated may be followed. As it is interesting to an outdoor audience to see players emerge from different places, a variety of entrances and exits should be devised.

After each player is letter perfect in his part, rehearsals may be de-

voted to particular aspects of acting and to special scenes. Important figures should be seen near the front of the stage more frequently than should the minor characters, unimportant figures remaining farther to one side or the other, or toward the rear. In so pictorial a production as a pageant, grouping is of great importance. Changes of position should follow one another as a series of pictures. Balance is a matter of feeling and appropriateness rather than of rule, yet the wise director is he who realizes the difficulties to be encountered and has the major actions and groupings planned before the cast assembles.

A director who is economical of his actors' time and strength finds the actors in turn increasingly conscientious. The evening may be divided up, the players notified which scenes will come at which periods, in order that they need only be present when required. Supernumeraries, once given written instructions, are summoned for a few general rehearsals toward the last. All singing is rehearsed separately, as is the dancing.

The dress rehearsal should be carefully organized beforehand: each episode leader being held responsible for his players and the prompt and effective rendering of the individual scene. A typed sheet of instructions, with placing of properties, music and light-cues, locations of costume and make-up tents, waiting places for players not on the stage, entrances and exits and final disposition of all players awaiting the finale, is handed to each episode director. The details are gone over with him from beginning to end and all obscure points made clear. Then when the actual complete rehearsal takes place, it should go with as much vim as if it were the premiere and the audience on hand to behold and applaud.

## ORGANIZATION

### *Time for Preparation*

A pageant needs organization as much as a city needs a system of government. The prime mover enlists enthusiasts who form an initial committee. This group, in turn, secures author and director and forms a general committee. The duties of casting, costuming, stage design, of selecting outdoor site or hall, superintending music, dancing, art, attending to the finance, publicity, and business—all require responsible committees, who not alone make plans but who see to the execution of them. Especially important is the choice of episode directors to serve as captains for the groups of players. The available time for preparation must be carefully allotted that specified progress will be made at specified times. The labor of organization is complete only after the production has been given for the last time, the costumes and properties duly returned, the bills paid, and the treasurer's report audited.



*Publicity and Budget*

Publicity is necessary, both to insure success and to make the pageant widely representative of every class and creed by an appeal for aid to all organizations in the community, social, racial, secular, religious. Attendance at the pageant depends upon the success of the publicity, as does its financial status.

At an early date a tentative budget should be made by a cautious reckoning of the gate receipts. In conference with the committee chairmen, allotments can then be made to each division of the work. Solicitation for contributions of costumes, properties, antiques, and of personal services of all kinds; wholesale buying, thrift in expenditure,—these are wise economies. For early expenditures a guarantee fund must be arranged. Later bills are paid out of the gate receipts, concessions, and minor sources of income. Publicity should be cumulative and increase in size, in frequency, and in attractiveness, until the tickets are put on sale. Then it should be sustained at a high level up to the very day of performance. Definite information is the first essential; interesting data is the second. Consult a publicity expert.

After all is said and done, it is to be hoped that a surplus will remain as the nucleus for a permanent George Washington Memorial.

## TYPES OF GEORGE WASHINGTON PAGEANTS

The material for a George Washington pageant is at once so varied in range, so rich in possibilities of reproduction, that the task is in limiting the selection rather than in having to piece it out. Almost any group can go to the events of Washington's life and find scenes to satisfy its peculiar needs. Roughly, the events of the Washingtonian era fall into scenes adaptable to schools, rural audiences, civic and community playing, the military, fraternal orders, the Church. The initial step is to determine the occasion for which it is to be used and the group, both for whom it is intended and who will be the actors in it. A pageant designed for performance before a school or college audience by players of school and college age would treat of scenes from one angle, while a pageant upon the same subject but designed for presentation before a military or civic group would treat of the scenes from quite another, supposing the same scenes to have been chosen.

*School Pageant*

For school, suitable scenes can readily be found in the home life of the boy Washington, first in his mother's home, then the homes of his half-brothers; in his associations with the neighboring families, especially in that delightful friendship between the sixteen-year-old boy and the elderly Lord Fairfax; in his forest experiences while on sur-

veying trips; in his military training under his half-brother Lawrence, and his early military ventures with the British troops and later with the militia in the Colonies.

#### *Rural Pageant*

A rural pageant might include scenes of plantation and country life with varied activities appropriate to the seasons and to occupations connected with field, forest and river. Outdoor life at Mt. Vernon should be especially studied.

#### *Civic Pageant*

A civic pageant might very well deal with the public life of Washington, in which case it would draw upon Washington's associations with the House of Burgesses, the Continental Congresses, as President; not omitting pictorial mention of events from those years when Washington, though a private citizen, nevertheless kept in the closest touch with official affairs and gave his best advice to the guidance of the Nation.

#### *Community Pageant*

A community pageant that appeals to a mixed audience is the least restricted in its portrayal of episodes. Sentiment, picturesqueness, diversity,—these are the first and foremost requisites. Mary Ball Washington, Martha Washington and Nellie Custis take a place in such a production by right; slaves, indentured servants, frontiersmen, settlers, Frenchmen, both religieux and soldiers, British regiments of the line and horse, Continental troops, foreign nobles,—move across the stage with all their picturesque trappings and paraphernalia. It would seem every interest, every mood, must be satisfied.

#### *Military Pageant*

Washington's career as a soldier and as Commander-in-Chief affords a wide field for selection of significant scenes, some of which are noted below.

#### *Fraternal Pageant*

While the choice of material for the fraternal pageant is limited, the scenes can be wonderfully effective: scenes connected with Washington's initiation into Masonry; his decision to return the lost British charter, his attendance at a Masonic funeral; his laying the corner stone of the Capitol with Masonic ceremonies.

#### *Church Pageant*

The Church pageant finds a narrow choice, perhaps, but one large in meaning. Commencing with scenes of family worship at Fredericksburg, and later, services at Pohick Church and in the midst of the desolation of Valley Forge, the theme widens to present the nobility of Washington's relationships with those from every walk in life,

with whom he came into contact, until his own great last utterance, "I am not afraid to die."

Whether presented as tableaux or pantomime, accompanied or unaccompanied by appropriate vocal or instrumental music, and introduced by prolocutor or symbolic characters, or as brief dramas held in sequence by entr'acte music, dancing or narrative,—the suggested scene, if infused with an earnest desire to pay homage to our first American, will meet with an eager enthusiasm in the audience and will circle the continent with praise of Washington.

The United States George Washington Bicentennial Commission issues a catalogue of pageants and plays, centering around the theme of George Washington and suitable for various auspices.

### SUGGESTIONS FOR PAGEANT EPISODES

- 1747—The frustration of Washington's boyish dream of going to sea.
- 1748—Washington begins his career as a surveyor, on the estate of Lord Fairfax.
- 1753—Washington's visit to Fort Le Boeuf to demand the withdrawal of the French from the Ohio Valley.
- 1753—Queen Aliquippa of the Delaware Indians receives Washington.
- 1755—Washington as aide to General Braddock.
- 1756—Washington presents a petition on military rank to Gov. Shirley, at Boston.
- 1759—Washington marries Mrs. Martha Dandridge Custis.
- 1760—Washington, the inventor, forging his plowshare at Mount Vernon.
- 1774—Washington, at the Virginia Convention, offers to lead troops to the relief of Boston.
- 1775—Washington is elected "General and Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the United Colonies."
- 1775—Washington takes command of the army besieging Boston.
- 1776—Washington causes the Declaration of Independence to be read before the troops on parade, in New York City.
- 1776—Washington crosses the Delaware on Christmas night and surprises the British.
- 1777—Washington receives the Marquis de Lafayette at Philadelphia.
- 1777—Washington takes his army into winter quarters at Valley Forge, where, with the assistance of Von Steuben, the straggling troops are disciplined into a formidable army.
- 1778—Washington makes known the French Alliance to his army at Valley Forge.
- 1778—Washington rallies the troops at Monmouth.
- 1780—The conference of General Washington and the Count de Rochambeau at Hartford, Connecticut.

- 1781—Washington's first visit to Mount Vernon since May, 1775.  
 1781—The surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown.  
 1783—Washington replies to the Newburgh addresses on Army complaints.  
 1783—Washington dines on a British warship near West Point with General Carleton. Upon departure he is honored by a salute of seventeen guns to a new nation.  
 1783—Washington takes leave of his officers at Fraunces' Tavern.  
 1783—Washington resigns his commission as Commander-in-Chief of the Army, at Annapolis.  
 1783—Washington's first Christmas at home after his absence of eight years.  
 1787—Washington presides over the Constitutional Convention.  
 1789—Washington takes leave of his mother at Fredericksburg.  
 1789—Washington's triumphal journey to New York to take office.  
 1789—Washington's Inauguration as the first President.  
 1791—Washington and L'Enfant plan the Federal Capital.  
 1793—Washington witnesses a balloon ascension at Philadelphia.  
 1793—Washington discusses the Neutrality Proclamation with his Cabinet.  
 1793—Washington lays the cornerstone of the Capitol.  
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